II. Remarks

Claims 8, 9 and 18-25 were pending in this application. Claims 18-25 are allowed. Claim 8 was rejected and claim 9 was objected to. The present amendment amends claim 8 to more particularly point out and clarify Applicant's invention. After this amendment, claims 8, 9 and 18-25 will be pending.

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Patent No. 1,541,976, issued to R. Alkan & Cie ("Alkan"). In view of the amendments and remarks contained herein, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 8 is traversed.

Applicant has amended claim 8 to recite that the first and second grooves are immediately adjacent to each other and co-aligned to form a channel when the piston is in an initial condition relative to the inner hollow cylindrical guide. A releasable element is contained within the channel to retain the piston in the initial condition. Support for these amendments may be found in Applicant's application at paragraph [0047] and Figures 7-8.

Alkan discloses a pneumatically-operated telescopic ejector for ejecting loads from an aircraft. *Alkan* at page 1, lines 9-24. The ejector comprises a body 41 and two pistons 42 and 43. The body 41 includes a hollow central cylinder 44. Under pressure of gas, the first piston 42 slides in the body 41

together with the second piston 43 along the hollow central cylinder 44, and the second piston 43 slides still further in the first piston 42 to define the fully extended position of the ejector for ejecting the load. Notably, the second piston 43 is guided from an initial position to the fully extended position by both the hollow central cylinder 44 and the first piston 42. *Id.* at page 3, lines 69-107 and Figures 5-7. Accordingly, the hollow central cylinder 44 and the second piston 43 are most analogous to Applicant's claimed inner hollow cylindrical guide and piston, respectively.

To facilitate pressure build-up of the gas for extending the ejector from the initial position, seals 54, 55, 56, 57 and 58 are provided throughout the ejector in corresponding grooves. In particular, an outer part of the hollow central cylinder 44 has a seal/groove arrangement 56, and an outer part of the second piston 43 has a seal/groove arrangement 58. The seal/groove arrangement 56 of the cylinder 44 interfaces directly with the inner part of the second piston 43, and the seal-groove arrangement 58 of the second piston 43 interfaces directly with the inner part of the first piston 42. *Id.* at Figures 5-7. Notably in the initial position of the ejector (see Fig. 5), the seal/groove arrangements 56 and 58 are spaced apart on opposing ends of the cylinder 44 and the second piston 43, respectively. Moreover, the seal/groove arrangement 58 is not on the inner part of the second piston 43 and thus, is separated from the seal/groove arrangement 56 of the cylinder 44 by the wall of the second piston 43. Accordingly in the initial position of the ejector, the seal/groove arrangements 56 and 58 of the cylinder 44 and the second piston 43 are not co-aligned, and are not immediately adjacent to each other.

Moreover, seal 56 is distinct from seal 58 and neither seal 56 and 58 is disclosed as being for retaining the second piston 43 in the initial position. Thus, neither seal 56 and 58 is analogous to Applicant's claimed releasable element. Furthermore, both the seal/groove arrangements 54 and 55, and the seal groove arrangement 57 and 58 are separated from each other by the wall of the second piston 43. Accordingly, none of the seal/groove arrangements 54-58 are immediately adjacent to another seal/groove arrangement 54-58.

This is unlike Applicant's invention where an outer part of the inner hollow cylindrical guide defines a first groove and an inner part of the piston defines a second groove, the first and second grooves being immediately adjacent to each other and co-aligned to form a channel when the piston is in an initial condition relative, and there being a releasable element contained within the channel to retain the piston in the initial condition. In that Alkan lacks the noted elements of claim 8, the rejection based thereon should be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicant believes that claim 8 and its dependent claim 9 are in a condition for allowance.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thankfully acknowledges the Examiner's allowance of claims 18-25.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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